

REMARKS

The application has been reviewed in light of the Final Office Action mailed March 13, 2006. At the time of the Office Action, Claims 1-20 were pending in this application. Claims 1-10 and 15 were rejected, and Claims 11-14 and 16-20 were objected to.

Objection to Claims 11-14 and 16-20

Claims 11-14 and 16-20 were objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

Independent Claim 10 has been amended to include all elements and limitations of allowable Claim 11. Since the Office Action has indicated that Claim 11 would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim (Claim 10) and any intervening claims (none), Applicant respectfully submits that amended independent Claim 10 is now allowable. Claims 12, 13 and 14 depend from amended independent Claim 10, and contain all limitations thereof. Therefore, for at least the same analogous reasons that Claim 10 is allowable, Claims 12, 13 and 14 are also allowable.

Independent Claim 15 has been amended to include all elements and limitations of allowable Claim 16. Since the Office Action has indicated that Claim 16 would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim (Claim 15) and any intervening claims (none), Applicant respectfully submits that amended independent Claim 15 is now allowable. Claims 17, 18, 19 and 20 depend from amended independent Claim 15, and contain all limitations thereof. Therefore, for at least the same analogous reasons that Claim 15 is allowable, Claims 17, 18, 19 and 20 are also allowable.

Claims 11 and 16 have been canceled.

Rejections of the Claims

Claims 1-7 and 10 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(e) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent 6,538,648 issued to Atsushi Koike et al. ("Koike").

Claims 1-7 have been canceled. Independent Claim 10 has been amended to include all elements and limitations of allowable Claim 11.

Claims 8 and 9 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Koike in view of U.S. Patent Publication 2003/0006979 issued to Tetsuo Morita ("Morita").

Claims 8 and 9 have been canceled.

Claim 15 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent 4,368,523 issued to Keiichi Kawate ("Kawate") in view of Koike.

Independent Claim 15 has been amended to include all elements and limitations of allowable Claim 16. Since the Office Action has indicated that Claim 16 would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim (Claim 15) and any intervening claims (none), Applicant respectfully submits that amended independent Claim 15 is now allowable.

All amendments are made in a good faith effort to advance the prosecution on the merits. Applicant reserves the right to subsequently take up prosecution on the claims as originally filed in this or appropriate continuation, continuation-in-part and /or divisional applications.

Applicant respectfully submits that no amendments have been made to the pending claims for the purpose of overcoming any prior art rejections that may restrict the literal scope of the claims or equivalents thereof.

Applicant respectfully requests that the amendments to the claims and the new claims submitted herein be entered, and further requests reconsideration in light of the amendments and remarks contained herein.

Applicant respectfully requests withdrawal of all objections and rejections, and that there be an early notice of allowance.

SUMMARY

In light of the above amendments and remarks Applicant respectfully submits that the application is now in condition for allowance and early notice of the same is earnestly solicited. Should the Examiner have any questions, comments or suggestions in furtherance of the prosecution of this application, the Examiner is invited to contact the attorney of record by telephone or facsimile.

Applicant believes that there are no additional fees due in association with the filing of this Response and Petition for Extension of Time. However, should the Commissioner deem that any other fees are due, including any additional fees for the required extension of time, Applicant respectfully requests that the Commissioner accept this as a Petition Therefore, and direct that any and all fees due are charged to Baker Botts L.L.P. **Deposit Account No. 02-0383, Order Number 075115.0287.**

Respectfully submitted,

BAKER BOTTS L.L.P. (023640)

By: 

Paul N. Katz
Reg. No. 35,917
One Shell Plaza
910 Louisiana Street
Houston, Texas 77002-4995
Telephone: 713.229.1343
Facsimile: 713.229.7743
Email: Paul.Katz@bakerbotts.com
ATTORNEY FOR APPLICANT

DATE: June 13, 2006